

for their property, for their safety, for their security. So it is a challenging venue.

We do not think very much about what takes place in correctional facilities, and perhaps that is the greatest testimony that we can possibly make on behalf of our correctional officers. We do not think often about those facilities, because we do not have to. They do such a great job, they are so dedicated to the smooth operation of the system, they take on for us what is a difficult and challenging function.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we honor them. They are true public servants. They deserve our support. They deserve all the honor and respect that we give them. So with that, I am pleased to join in supporting this resolution.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio and the gentleman from Wisconsin for sponsoring this resolution, and I urge Members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 180.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RUNAWAY, HOMELESS, AND MISSING CHILDREN PROTECTION ACT

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1925) to reauthorize programs under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and the Missing Children's Assistance Act, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1925

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act".

TITLE I—AMENDMENTS TO RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT

SEC. 101. AMENDMENT TO FINDINGS.

Section 302 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 302. FINDINGS.

"The Congress finds that—

"(1) youth who have become homeless or who leave and remain away from home without parental permission, are at risk of developing, and have a disproportionate share of, serious health, behavioral, and emotional problems because they lack sufficient re-

sources to obtain care and may live on the street for extended periods thereby endangering themselves and creating a substantial law enforcement problem for communities in which they congregate;

"(2) many such young people, because of their age and situation, are urgently in need of temporary shelter and services, including services that are linguistically appropriate and acknowledge the environment of youth seeking these services;

"(3) in view of the interstate nature of the problem, it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to develop an accurate national reporting system to report the problem, and to assist in the development of an effective system of care (including preventive and aftercare services, emergency shelter services, extended residential shelter, and street outreach services) outside the welfare system and the law enforcement system;

"(4) to make a successful transition to adulthood, runaway youth, homeless youth, and other street youth need opportunities to complete high school or earn a general equivalency degree, learn job skills, and obtain employment; and

"(5) improved coordination and collaboration between the Federal programs that serve runaway and homeless youth are necessary for the development of a long-term strategy for responding to the needs of this population."

SEC. 102. GRANT PROGRAM CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

The heading for part A of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5711 et seq.) is amended by striking "RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH" and inserting "BASIC CENTER".

SEC. 103. GRANTS FOR SERVICES PROVIDED.

Section 311(a)(2)(C) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5711(a)(2)(C)) is amended—

- (1) in clause (ii) by striking "and";
- (2) in clause (iii) by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and
- (3) after clause (iii) by inserting the following:

"(iv) at the request of runaway and homeless youth, testing for sexually transmitted diseases."

SEC. 104. REPEAL OF OBSOLETE PROVISION RELATING TO CERTAIN ALLOTMENTS.

Section 311(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5711(b)) is amended—

- (1) in paragraph (2), by striking "Subject to paragraph (3), the" and inserting "The";
- (2) by striking paragraph (3); and
- (3) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (3).

SEC. 105. ELIGIBILITY PROVISION.

Section 312(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5712(a)) is amended by striking "juveniles" each place it appears and inserting "youth".

SEC. 106. RECOGNITION OF STATE LAW RELATING TO CAPACITY LIMITATION ON ELIGIBLE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH CENTERS.

Section 312(b)(2)(A) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5712(b)(2)(A)) is amended by inserting after "youth" the following: "except where the center or locally controlled facility is located has a State or local law or regulation that requires a higher maximum to comply with licensure requirements for child and youth serving facilities".

SEC. 107. MATERNITY GROUP HOMES.

(a) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 322(a)(1) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-2(a)(1)) is amended—

- (1) by inserting after "group homes," the following: "including maternity group homes,"; and

(2) by inserting after "use of credit," the following: "parenting skills (as appropriate).";

(b) DEFINITION.—Section 322 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-2) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(c) DEFINITION.—In this part, the term 'maternity group home' means a community-based, adult-supervised transitional living arrangement that provides pregnant or parenting youth and their children with a supportive and supervised living arrangement in which such pregnant or parenting youth are required to learn parenting skills, including child development, family budgeting, health and nutrition, and other skills to promote their long-term economic independence in order to ensure the well-being of their children."

SEC. 108. LIMITED EXTENSION OF 540-DAY SHELTER ELIGIBILITY PERIOD.

Section 322(a)(2) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-2(a)(2)) is amended by inserting after "days" the following: "except that a youth in a program under this part who is under the age of 18 years on the last day of the 540-day period may, if otherwise qualified for the program, remain in the program until the earlier of the youth's 18th birthday or the 180th day after the end of the 540-day period".

SEC. 109. PART A PLAN COORDINATION ASSURANCES.

Section 312(b)(4)(B) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5712(b)(4)(B)) is amended by striking "personnel" and all that follows through the semicolon and inserting "McKinney-Vento school district liaisons, designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)), to assure that runaway and homeless youth are provided information about the educational services available to such youth under subtitle B of title VII of that Act";

SEC. 110. PART B PLAN COORDINATION AGREEMENT.

Section 322(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-2(a)) is amended—

- (1) by striking "and" after the semicolon at the end of paragraph (13);
- (2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (14) and inserting "; and"; and
- (3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(15) to coordinate services with McKinney-Vento school district liaisons, designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)), to assure that runaway and homeless youth are provided information about the educational services available to such youth under subtitle B of title VII of that Act."

SEC. 111. PART B PLAN DEVELOPMENT.

Section 322(a)(7) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-2(a)(7)) is amended to read as follows:

"(7) to develop an adequate plan to ensure proper referral of homeless youth to social service, law enforcement, educational (including post-secondary education), vocational, training (including services and programs for youth available under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998), welfare (including programs under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996), legal service, and health care programs and to help integrate and coordinate such services for youths";

SEC. 112. COORDINATION OF PROGRAMS.

Section 341 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-21) is amended—

- (1) in paragraph (1), by striking "and" after the semicolon at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) shall consult, as appropriate, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to ensure coordination of programs and services for homeless youth.”.

SEC. 113. CLARIFICATION OF GRANT AUTHORITY.

Section 343(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-23(a)) is amended by inserting after “service projects” the following: “regarding activities under this title”.

SEC. 114. TECHNICAL AMENDMENT RELATING TO DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.

The section heading of section 344 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-24) is amended by striking “TEMPORARY”.

SEC. 115. REPEAL OF OBSOLETE PROVISION RELATING TO STUDY.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.) is amended by striking section 345 (42 U.S.C. 5714-25).

SEC. 116. AGE LIMIT FOR HOMELESS YOUTH.

Section 387(3)(A)(i) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a(3)(A)(i)) is amended by inserting after “of age” the following: “, or, in the case of a youth seeking shelter in a center under part A, not more than 18 years of age”.

SEC. 117. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) OTHER THAN PART E.—Section 388(a)(1) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5751(a)(1)) is amended by striking “such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003” and inserting “\$105,000,000 for fiscal year 2004, and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008”.

(b) PART E.—Section 388(a)(4) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5751(a)(4)) is amended by striking “2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003” and inserting “2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008”.

(c) PART B ALLOCATION.—Section 388(a)(2)(B) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5751(a)(2)(B)) is amended by striking “not less than 20 percent, and not more than 30 percent” and inserting “45 percent and, in those fiscal years in which continuation grant obligations and the quality and number of applicants for parts A and B warrant not more than 55 percent”.

SEC. 118. REPORT ON PROMISING STRATEGIES TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, shall submit to the Congress a report on promising strategies to end youth homelessness.

SEC. 119. STUDY OF HOUSING SERVICES AND STRATEGIES.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall conduct a study of programs funded under part B of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714-1 et seq.) to report on long-term housing outcomes for youth after exiting the program. The study of any such program should provide information on housing services available to youth upon exiting the program, including assistance in locating and retaining permanent housing and referrals to other residential programs. In addition, the study should identify housing models and placement strategies that prevent future episodes of homelessness.

SEC. 120. RESTRICTION ON USE OF FUNDS.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 389. RESTRICTION ON USE OF FUNDS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds contained in this title may be used for any pro-

gram of distributing sterile needles or syringes for the hypodermic injection of any illegal drug.

“(b) SEPARATE ACCOUNTING.—Any individual or entity who receives any funds contained in this title and who carries out any program described in subsection (a) shall account for all funds used for such program separately from any funds contained in this title.”.

TITLE II—AMENDMENTS TO MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE ACT

SEC. 201. AMENDMENT TO FINDINGS.

Section 402 of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5771) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 402. FINDINGS.

“The Congress finds that—

“(1) each year thousands of children are abducted or removed from the control of a parent having legal custody without such parent's consent, under circumstances which immediately place the child in grave danger;

“(2) many missing children are at great risk of both physical harm and sexual exploitation;

“(3) in many cases, parents and local law enforcement officials have neither the resources nor the expertise to mount expanded search efforts;

“(4) abducted children are frequently moved from one locality to another, requiring the cooperation and coordination of local, State, and Federal law enforcement efforts;

“(5) the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children—

“(A) serves as the national resource center and clearinghouse;

“(B) works in partnership with the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of State, and many other agencies in the effort to find missing children and prevent child victimization; and

“(C) operates a national and increasingly worldwide network, linking the Center online with each of the missing children clearinghouses operated by the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, as well as with Scotland Yard in the United Kingdom, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, INTERPOL headquarters in Lyon, France, and others, which enable the Center to transmit images and information regarding missing children to law enforcement across the United States and around the world instantly.”.

SEC. 202. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) ANNUAL GRANT TO NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN.—Section 404(b)(2) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5773(b)(2)) is amended by striking “2005” and inserting “2008”.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(a) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5777(a)) is amended by striking “2005.” and inserting “2008”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1925, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking my colleagues on the Committee on Education and the Workforce for their diligence in getting us to the floor today. Specifically, I want to commend the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman BOEHNER), the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), as well as the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act, which provides for the reauthorization of both the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and the Missing Children's Assistance Act. This legislation strengthens and funds the programs and services authorized under these acts in order to address the needs of these children who need our help and protection.

The purpose of both acts remains relatively unchanged. However, we do aim to strengthen these programs that serve these at-risk children and youth.

□ 1030

H.R. 1925 continues to fund the Basic Center Program, the Transitional Living Program, and the Street Outreach Program to meet the needs of runaway, homeless and street youth. Grants are awarded to local public and private organizations to establish and operate these community-based shelters that are not part of the law enforcement, juvenile justice, child welfare, or mental health systems.

This legislation also seeks to improve Federal coordination to ensure a collaboration between the United States Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Housing and Urban Development, and Justice in providing programs and services targeting runaway and homeless youth.

H.R. 1925 increases Federal support for these at-risk youth by authorizing the Runaway and Homeless Youth programs at \$105 million for fiscal year 2004 and at “such sums” for fiscal years 2005 through 2008.

Additionally, H.R. 1925 continues to provide Federal support for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to enhance efforts to locate and recover missing children and help prevent abductions and sexual exploitation.

This bill increases the authorization level of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children from \$10 million to \$20 million for each of the fiscal years 2004 through 2008, mirroring the PROTECT Act, and extends the authorization of the remaining activities under the act as “such sums” for fiscal years 2004 through 2008.

As the Nation's resource center and clearinghouse for information on missing and exploited children, the Center provides assistance to families and law

enforcement agencies in locating and recovering missing and exploited children, both nationally and internationally.

The Center acts to coordinate public and private programs that locate, recover, or unite missing children with their families; and it nationally disseminates information relating to innovative and model programs, services, and legislation that benefit missing and exploited children.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we continue to support the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; and I am pleased that H.R. 1925 accomplishes that goal.

H.R. 1925 does make several modifications to current law to streamline and strengthen the Federal support for the programs and activities that serve this very vulnerable segment of our country's youth population. The improvements made in this legislation will result in better services for at-risk youth. In fact, these improvements will benefit the Advocates for Bartow's Children, a basic center that is located in the Eleventh Congressional District of Georgia in Bartow County, my district.

Additionally, the work of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children will continue to be supported, as they have played a role in many of the 1,074 cases of recovering of missing children in my home State of Georgia.

The Runaway, Homeless and Missing Children Protection Act makes small changes to these programs for at-risk youth. I would like to say that, although we are making some changes, these programs are already working well and efficiently. These are valuable programs that make a big difference in the lives of the children, youth, and families that rely on them. This bill enjoys support from both sides of the aisle, and the effort to pass this legislation has been truly bipartisan.

Mr. Speaker, this is much-needed legislation; and I would urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1925.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act. I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this important and much-needed legislation which reauthorizes the Federal programs that protect and assist the most vulnerable young people in our society.

This legislation enjoys broad bipartisan support. I would like to thank the committee chairman, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Select Education, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), and my colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), the sponsor of H.R. 1925, for working diligently with us to ensure that this important legislation could move expeditiously through the

process and remain something we can all support.

We would never get anything through the legislative process without dedicated, professional staff work; and this bill is no exception. I would like to also commend our committee staff, Denise Forte and Ricardo Martinez, as well as the staff for the majority, Whitney Rhoades, Krisann Pierce, and Rebecca Jones for their excellent work.

The programs funded under this act reflect what brings us together as a society. In the face of crisis, Americans want to lend a helping hand. That is what these programs do, they provide emergency shelter and services to young people in crisis, helping them get on a path to healthy, independent lives, and hopefully reuniting them with their families.

The programs funded under this act, Basic Centers, Transitional Living Programs, and Street Outreach Programs, are desperately needed in communities across the country. We have excellent programs operating in my own home State of Texas. During our subcommittee hearing, we learned of the tremendous work being done by the Washington, D.C., Latin American Youth Center through these programs.

We heard from a young man who was once homeless. Through these programs, he is now on the path to independence and possibly a college degree. I asked him how the program earned his trust so he was willing to leave the streets and take another life path. His answer was simple: They gave him a place to stay immediately.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation so that other young people in need will have a place to stay, a place that will put them on a path to a better life.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE).

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

I rise to support the Homeless and Runaway Youth Act, H.R. 1925. I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman BOEHNER) and the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), for their work on this committee.

The number of young people in our country who are currently homeless is truly alarming. Most of these young people are without any parental support. Many are simply fleeing abusive and dangerous situations. So it is critical that we provide these young people a safe haven, a place where they can have food and shelter.

But certainly young people need more than this. They need the help and the care of an adult. They need a relationship. I think that is important. I think whether a child is homeless because he simply has no parents or is fleeing an abusive situation, they all share one thing; that is that there is no adult in their life that they can really count on.

In my previous profession, 36 years of coaching, I dealt with a great many young people in situations like this where they had absolutely no support. I saw firsthand the difference a coach, a teacher, a mentor could make in the life of a young person.

This is one reason why I would like to, in conjunction with discussing this particular bill, mention the importance of an initiative that the President has recently promoted, which is to make a rather concerted effort in this country to promote mentoring. A mentor will reduce absenteeism from school by 50 percent, reduce teenage pregnancy, reduce drug and alcohol abuse and violent behavior.

Currently, we have 18 million young people in the country who need a mentor, so along with this bill I think a mentoring initiative is critical. I certainly support this bill and would like to thank again the chairman and the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), for their work.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act.

As a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I would like to begin by commending the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), our ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), and the bill's author, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), for their leadership in fashioning a sensible bipartisan consensus in this very important area of public policy.

Our Nation's most vulnerable youth needed us to set aside our differences and come together and step up to the challenge of getting them the help they need and deserve. I think in this bill we have done that.

Mr. Speaker, compared to the size of some of the other reauthorization bills that have come out of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, some may say this is a small bill. But I think we should make no mistake about it. This bill will be a big deal to the youth and the thousands of homeless and runaway children who, by virtue of our actions today, will have a better opportunity to reclaim their lives with the Federal support this bill provides. It will help throw many youth whose lives are sinking that life jacket they so desperately need.

For the first time, this legislation includes the specific authorization for Federal programs designed to help runaway and homeless youth, \$105 million for fiscal year 2004, which represents a 19 percent increase for the worthy outreach, screening, counseling, referral, shelter services, and other services funded under the act.

It includes maternity group homes to support teen mothers' care for their young children as they begin their walk down the road to financial independence.

It sets the age of eligibility for need-based services at 18, so vulnerable teens are not summarily kicked out of programs helping them turn their lives around after an arbitrary period of time.

It sensibly ensures that services for homeless and runaway youth are well coordinated with other Federal programs, like the McKinney-Vento Act, the Work Force Investment Act, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

It also reauthorizes the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which has proven itself an invaluable tool to law enforcement since its creation nearly two decades ago.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the substantial bipartisan majority that turned back what I believe was an ideologically-driven attempt in committee to handcuff public health officials in efforts to ensure the reproductive health of the youth we are trying to reach with this legislation. Our unity across the aisle on this committee was a triumph for good science and common sense.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a very worthy piece of legislation and a good response to a critical public policy need. Again, I want to commend the leadership of the committee leaders on both sides of the aisle and again, the author of the bill, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), the honorable chairman of the Subcommittee on Select Education.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding time to me. I congratulate him on moving this bill forward. Also, thanks to the ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), with whom once again we have demonstrated that we have been able to work in a bipartisan way and move an important bill out of the subcommittee.

I rise in support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act. This authorizes Federal assistance for programs that serve runaway and homeless youth and missing and exploited children.

H.R. 1925 contains the reauthorization of both the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and the Missing Children's Assistance Act. This legislation strengthens the programs and services authorized under these acts in order to better address the needs of at-risk youth.

H.R. 1925 makes several modifications to current law to streamline and strengthen the Federal support for the programs and activities that serve this very vulnerable segment of our country's youth population. We have

worked to protect runaway and homeless youth by keeping them off the streets, away from criminal activities, and out of desperate circumstances.

Additionally, we continue to support the Center in its efforts to locate and recover missing children and help prevent child abductions and sexual exploitation.

More specifically, H.R. 1925 defines the term "group homes" in the transitional living program to include maternity group homes, which are defined as community-based adult-supervised transitional living arrangements that provide pregnant or parenting youth and their children with supportive and supervised living arrangements in which the pregnant or parenting youth are required to learn parenting and other skills to promote their long-term economic independence and self-sufficiency in order to ensure the well-being of their children.

This provision affords pregnant and parenting runaway and homeless youth access to transitional living opportunities, an alternative to the environments of violence and despair that many young pregnant and parenting mothers face.

H.R. 1925 also adjusts the percentage allocations split between the Basic Center Program and the Transitional Living Program to address the increased need for transitional services that will enable more communities to serve the long-term needs of runaway and homeless youth.

A young man who was participating in the Transitional Living Program in the D.C. area told the members of the Subcommittee on Select Education during a recent hearing that when the Transitional Living Program that he is participating in ends, he is confident that he will be ready to make the transition to self-sufficient adulthood. The Transitional Living Program has been the bridge that he needs to safely begin this journey. It is important that this journey to self-sufficiency be available to more homeless youth.

□ 1045

H.R. 1925 enjoys bipartisan support and the staff and Members on both sides of the aisle have worked diligently throughout the process. We have also worked with the administration and sought the input of outside groups and programs in the field in crafting the legislation before us today.

I think that everyone involved in this process recognizes that these programs and services are vitally important to the at-risk population they serve. The Runaway, Homeless and Missing Children Protection Act makes minor changes to these programs for at-risk youth and children, programs which are already operating efficiently. This legislation includes provisions worked out by Members on both sides of the aisle and reauthorizes programs that should be supported by the Congress.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), the ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the chairman of the committee, for the work in passing this legislation and getting it to the floor today.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from the State of Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless and Missing Children's Protection Act. I would like to commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER); the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER); Select Education subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA); and Select Education subcommittee ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), for working together to produce a great piece of legislation. I also want to commend the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) for his introduction of this legislation which reaches out to one of America's youngest hard-to-serve populations.

According to the second "National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Throwaway Children" released in October of 2002, it is estimated that there are approximately 80,000 children reported missing each year, which is 2,000 children each day.

The Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness estimates that of the 150,000 that are homeless in Illinois, approximately 12,000 are unaccompanied teenagers. This resolution reaches out to our young people who are in need and who are in some of the most desperate situations. Unfortunately, we cannot make street life disappear or even make it reach a level of utopia or have the sense of morality that we would seek, but we can ensure that there are services made available to help ease the stress and fear of not having the security of a home or family.

I am pleased to support this resolution because it will provide grants to support emergency centers, long-term residential supports, and street-based outreach and education to those individuals that have been victims of sexual abuse or are sexually active. The 19 percent increase over fiscal year 2003, bringing the funding total to \$105 million, is very promising. And I believe that as a result of it we will save many young lives from violence, disease, and death. By reaching out to help these young people turn their lives around, we are really helping our Nation decrease the number of teens that will resort to violence, drugs, and sex for survival.

I believe that this is a seriously important piece of legislation. And, once again, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) for his understanding and sensitivity in introducing it. I commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER); the ranking

member, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER); and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for their leadership on bringing this to us today.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act, which authorizes Federal assistance for programs that serve and protect runaway and homeless youth and missing and exploited children.

H.R. 1925 contains the reauthorization of both the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and the Missing Children's Assistance Act. This legislation strengthens these programs in order to address the unique needs of these at-risk youth. With this bill, we will ensure the protection of runaway and homeless youth, keeping them off the streets and away from dangerous circumstances by providing both emergency shelter programs and long-term supportive assistance. Additionally, we continue to support the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and its efforts to locate and recover missing children and help prevent child abductions and sexual exploitation.

H.R. 1925 reauthorizes the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), and will continue to fund the Basic Center Program, the Transitional Living Program, and the Street Outreach Program. Grants are used to develop or strengthen community-based programs that are not part of the law enforcement, juvenile justice, and child welfare system. The Act has been successful in meeting the needs of runaway and homeless youth and in reuniting these youth with their families. There are, however, some specific improvements in H.R. 1925, including adjusting the funding allocation between the Basic Center Program and the Transitional Living Program to address the increased need for transitional services and enable more communities to serve the long-term needs of runaway and homeless youth. This legislation also clarifies that group homes in the Transitional Living Program may provide parenting youth and their children with a supportive and supervised living arrangement in which the pregnant or parenting youth learn parenting and other skills to promote their long-term economic independence and self-sufficiency in order to ensure the well-being of their children.

The Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act also addresses the needs of missing, abducted, and sexually exploited children by reauthorizing the Missing Children's Assistance Act. This legislation increases the authorization level of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children from \$10 million to \$20 million for each of the fiscal years 2004 through 2008, extending the authorization that was begun in the PROTECT Act, and extends the authorization of the remaining activities under the Act through 2008.

I would like to thank Congressman GINGREY for his leadership as the sponsor of this bill, Subcommittee Chairman HOEKSTRA for his guidance on this bill, as well as Mr. MILLER and Mr. HINOJOSA for working with us in a bipartisan manner from the very beginning of the process.

This legislation includes provisions worked out by Members on both sides of the aisle, and reauthorizes programs that should be

supported by the Congress. I would urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1925, the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act. For a program that is only funded at 90 million dollars it has had a large impact.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) programs provide funds to community-based, faith-based and public organizations to develop and expand comprehensive, cost-efficient, and effective management, shelter, housing and supports for youth in high-risk situations and their families. I am pleased this bill was completed in a bipartisan manner and will not prevent shelters from distributing contraception.

There continues to be a need for stable, residential environments that provide life skills supports for youth who are unable to live safely with their families, due to situations of child abuse, neglect, and parental substance abuse.

The current competitive grant mechanism for distributing RHYA funds to community-based, faith-based and public organizations is fundamentally sound and entirely appropriate given the relatively small size of the federal RHYA budget. Most state and local governments do not have the capacity at this time, given their budgetary problems, to absorb the burden of administering RHYA programs.

Congress established RHYA programs as low-cost, prevention and early intervention oriented program alternatives to State custodial child welfare, law enforcement, juvenile justice and mental health systems. The complementary relationship between runaway and homeless youth serving programs and these various systems would be severely damaged if RHYA programs would be consolidated into any one of them.

The child welfare system in New Jersey is in crisis. Many youths slip through the cracks of the child welfare, juvenile justice and mental health systems. RHYA programs help provide supportive services, i.e., crisis intervention, counseling, housing, safety from the streets and other basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing.

RHYA funds help programs leverage state, local and private funding. Somerset Home, which serves some of my constituents, has a Transitional Living Program, a Basic Center Program and a Street Outreach Program. Federal funds represent \$450,000 of their \$2.5 million budget. The rest of the funding comes from state and local government with private funding from individuals, corporations, corporations and civic-minded groups comprising nearly \$400,000 of the operating budget.

Somerset Home's Outreach Program ensures rapid engagement with young people on the street in an effort to prevent physical and sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation, disease, long term homelessness, and death.

The Basic Center Program provides funds for emergency shelters for young people unable to live safely with their families and services while conducting efforts to reunite youth with their families or arrange for their placement in alternative supervised settings.

The Transitional Living Program provides transitional housing and life skill supports to older homeless youth.

Somerset Home facilitates health promotion, pregnancy prevention, academic achievement, employment, reduction in sexual exploitation, and other positive factors for youth in high-risk situations.

These services provide a vital safety net that protects youth from further victimization and exploitation. These youth run to the street and find their way to RHYA funded programs due to circumstances in the one such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, substance abuse and other forms of domestic violence. These youths are victims of the unthinkable actions of parents or guardians, entrusted with their care that has violated this trust. Together we can help these youth through the difficult transition from a difficult adolescence to a productive and maybe even happy adulthood.

Mr. Speaker, the nation's runaway and homeless need this program and I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1925, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS FOR WINNING THE 2003 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN'S ICE HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 217) commending the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers for Winning the 2003 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 217

Whereas on Saturday, April 12, 2003, the defending NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey champions, the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers, won the National Championship for the second straight year;

Whereas the University of Minnesota defeated the University of New Hampshire in the championship game by the score of 5-1, having defeated the University of Michigan 3-2 in overtime in the semifinals;

Whereas the Golden Gophers reached the 56th Annual Frozen Four by defeating Mercyhurst College 9-2 and Ferris State University 7-4;

Whereas the University of Minnesota received an automatic bid to the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey National Championship Tournament by defeating Colorado College 4-2 in the Western Collegiate Hockey Association Tournament championship game;

Whereas the Golden Gophers became the first repeat NCAA Men's Ice Hockey champions in 31 years;